

DTIC-207-01

21 August 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL MAXWELL D. TAYLOR, USA

Subject: After-Action Report of Movement of Battle Group to Berlin (U)

1. CINCPAC reported the schedule of the Battle Group would be as follows:

Cross IF Halmstedt check pt 200415Z.
Head column arrive Berlin 201315Z.
Column close Berlin 201530Z.

2. The actual times for these events were as follows:

Cross IF Halmstedt check pt 200335Z.
Head column arrive Berlin 201134Z.
Column closed Berlin 201919Z.

3. From the information available the following factors contributed to the delay of the column closing Berlin:

a. The first Serial was delayed at Halmstedt by Soviet demand for a recount of personnel. Recount indicated US documents in order; error with Soviet.

b. Serial Two was delayed at Halmstedt by vehicle counting. It was also delayed at Berlin until one vehicle which had broken down caught up with the column before processing through the Soviet checkpoint. Berlin Soviets at Berlin would not clear Serial until it was complete. Serial Two arrived at the Soviet checkpoint Berlin at 201230Z and did not clear the US checkpoint until 201500Z, the delay being caused by the broken down vehicle indicated above.

c. Serials Three and Four were held at the Berlin checkpoint until after Serial Two was processed.

recovered. This Serial was also delayed 15 minutes at Helmsdorf when a vehicle ran into a ditch and had to be extricated by a wrecker. This Serial also had one vehicle break down 43 miles East of Helmsdorf. However, the vehicle was repaired and proceeded in company with the Serial.

4. Processing times at checkpoints considered normal. No additional Soviet personnel provided at checkpoints to facilitate processing.

5. The column was under aerial observation during its march from Helmsdorf to Berlin. There were also members of the East German "VOPR" stationed at intervals along the autobahn.

6. With regard to the barrier pass which was brought to your attention in General Lemnitzer's office last Friday afternoon, the following information is submitted. Based on the information available, and this has not been documented, it appears that the Russians and East Germans first introduced the barrier pass in 1956. At this time the West Berlin commandants held a meeting and discussed this matter. They agreed not to protest the use of the barrier pass since the Soviets still noted and approved the passage of allied traffic passing through the checkpoints. They considered that the barrier pass merely indicated to the East Germans that the allied vehicle, or vehicles, concerned had been passed by the Soviets.

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